

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An adapter unit that communicates with a personal digital assistant (PDA), comprising:
 - a carrier portion that includes two sidewalls, and conforms to a surface of the PDA; and
 - a product identification reader that is encased in the carrier portion and reads a product identification code.
2. The adapter unit of claim 1, further comprising an expansion connector that facilitates a communication link between the carrier portion and the PDA.
3. The adapter unit of claim 2, the expansion connector facilitates the communication link between the PDA and the product identification reader.
4. The adapter unit of claim 1, the carrier portion further comprising at least one of a radio, a CCD imager, an RFID tag reader, a global positioning system technology, and a telephone.
5. The adapter unit of claim 1, the carrier portion further comprising a wall portion that overlaps the two sidewalls creating a seam overlap between different portions of the adapter.
6. The adapter unit of claim 1, the product identification reader is included between a cover and a bottom wall of the carrier portion.
7. The adapter unit of claim 1, at least one of the sidewalls is curved to conform to the PDA.

8. The adapter unit of claim 1, the sidewalls only partially cover respective surfaces of the PDA.

9. The adapter unit of claim 1, further comprising circuitry that facilitates wireless communications.

10. The adapter unit of claim 1, further comprising a gripping surface that extends above a top section of a bottom wall of the carrier portion.

11. The adapter unit of claim 10, the gripping surface comprises more than 20% of the length of the PDA.

12. An adapter unit that communicates with a PDA, comprising:
a carrier portion that includes two sidewalls, and conforms to a surface of the PDA;
an expansion connector that facilitates a communication link between the carrier portion and the PDA; and
a product identification reader that reads a product identification code, and is encased in the carrier portion between a cover and a bottom wall of the carrier portion.

13. The adapter unit of claim 12, further comprising a battery door that facilitates access to a battery.

14. The adapter unit of claim 12, further comprising an interface for a PCMCIA compatible module.

15. The adapter unit of claim 12 interfaces to the PDA *via* at least four surfaces of the PDA.

16. The adapter unit of claim 12, further comprising a detachable handle grip that extends from a surface of the adapter, the handle grip includes a triggering mechanism that triggers the adapter.

17. The adapter unit of claim 12, the handle grip includes a power source that provides power to the adapter.

18. An adapter unit that couples to a PDA, comprising:
carrier means that includes two sidewalls and a bottom wall that interface to corresponding surfaces of the PDA;
means for scanning a product dataform with a scanning means, the scanning means housed in the carrier means;
means for processing signals associated with the scanning means; and
an expansion connector that facilitates communications between the carrier means and the PDA.

19. The adapter unit of claim 18, further comprising at least one of a radio, a CCD imager, an RFID tag reader, global positioning system, and a telephone;

20. The adapter unit of claim 18, further comprising a power source that provides power to the scanning means.